

# SuperVISION

WINTER 2009

## Welcome all...

..to the latest edition of SuperVision.

Coming into winter, you might think the risk of drowning drops for young children. Sadly it doesn't. For tiny tots the wonder of water is a year-round attraction.

What does change in winter is where children drown. In winter, we see more babies and toddlers drowning in bathtubs. Ironically, many of these children drown because parents are trying so hard to keep their children warm and safe. Often we hear from mums and dads who raced to get an extra warm towel from the cupboard to protect them from the cold, literally leaving their child for a minute with tragic consequences.

It's easy to forget that no matter how loudly your baby or toddler cries when they're hungry or tired, if they are drowning, they make no sound at all.

To help you protect the children in your life from drowning we've included four simple bath time tips in this edition of SuperVision. If you don't have a little one at home, please share this edition with your friends or family who do.



By reminding busy parents of the need to be extra careful with tiny tots at bath time you may well save a life.

Also, in this edition we have very exciting news about a brand new event which will be taking place across Australia over summer. It's a great way to get involved with the Royal Life Saving Society's efforts to prevent childhood drowning.

*Until next time, stay safe around the water and keep warm!*

*Sam Riley,* KEEP WATCH AMBASSADOR



## KEEP WATCH CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

Our latest Keep Watch campaign for this year has drawn to a close, and we're delighted with the support we've received from individuals, media outlets and organisations across Australia.

Here are some of the highlights from the Home Pool Safety campaign which ran from November 2008 until June 2009.

- Our Keep Watch Community Service Announcement was played more than 1000 times by television stations across Australia.
- Dozens of major companies and organisations supported the Home Pool Safety campaign by including articles in their internal staff newsletters and / or external publications, reaching hundreds of thousands of Australians.
- 100,000 fridge magnets, 100,000 brochures and 5,000 posters were produced.
- The Keep Watch Ambassadors program reached a new high of 97 Parliamentary Ambassadors.
- There were more than 100,000 page views of our Home Pool Safety and Keep Watch websites.

- Around 100 individual news radio and longer radio interviews were done by Royal Life Saving, many of which were then syndicated to other radio stations.

- Seven lengthy television news interviews were aired.

To all of you who helped make the campaign such a success, thank you for your support.

If you still haven't downloaded your free copy of the home pool safety checklist, it is not too late – go to [www.homepoolsafety.com.au](http://www.homepoolsafety.com.au) and check your backyard pool area today.

**proudly supported by:**

**PoolWerx**  
The Healthy Pool People

## QUICK NEWS



### Welcome to our new President

Royal Life Saving is delighted to welcome our New President, The Hon Chief Justice Terence Higgins AO.

He is a longtime supporter of Royal Life Saving, serving previously as our President between 1997 and 2003. Terry has been the President of the ACT Branch of Royal Life Saving for over a decade and has overseen some major advances in water safety. Chief Justice Higgins was appointed as a Judge of the Federal Court of Australia in 1990 and is currently the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory.

We are delighted that he has again volunteered to take on this important role and look forward to working with him during the coming year.

### Recognition for Volunteers

Royal Life Saving was delighted that two of our hard-working volunteers were recognised in the latest Queens Birthday Honours List.

Our new Deputy President, Dianne Montalto was awarded the Emergency Services Medal for her services to emergency services in Victoria. Mrs Montalto has provided over 50 continuous years to lifesaving in Victoria. Our National Medical Adviser Professor, John Pearn was awarded the Officer of the Order of Australia. Professor Pearn generously donates his time to the Royal Life Saving Society - Australia.

## ROYAL LIFE SAVING KEEP WATCH AMBASSADORS



### Joe Hockey - Shadow Treasurer and Federal Member for North Sydney

Australia's affinity for the water has almost become a cliché. We love our beaches and Harbours and we love our swimming pools.

Growing up in the northern suburbs of Sydney, much of my childhood was spent exploring the shoreline of Middle Harbour or down at the beach. It was also spent playing with mates around the pool at friends' places – how I wished we had one in our own backyard!

Now the cycle is repeating itself with my own kids. With two young ones and a third on the way, a love of the water seems to be something they have in their genes. They already love spending time in our pool or down at the Greenwich Baths and at the beach. When you become a parent you understand for the first time how powerful that protective instinct is that has been a feature of parenthood since the first humans walked the earth. It extends to the safety of our children when they are around the pool. But sadly, too many people who own pools forget some of the simple steps to make our swimming pools places of joy rather than the cause of despair. 35 children under five drowning each year is 35 too many needless deaths.

That's why I am delighted to be an Ambassador for the Royal Life Saving Society's Keep Watch program. With just a little bit of common sense and attention we can make our pools safe for toddlers. The work that the Society does in this regard is just so important.



### Senator Catryna Bilyk - Senator for Tasmania

I became a Keep Watch Ambassador to support and highlight the importance of water safety. Water safety education plays a central role in the challenge to prevent drowning deaths and water related accidents.

In Australia, water activities are usually associated with fun, friends and frolics. It is therefore imperative to ensure that the dangers associated with these activities are known and respected.

Participating in water activities is part of everyday life for many Tasmanian people. A majority of the population live only a short trip away from a beach or swimming pool, and unfenced dams are a common feature of many farm properties. It is crucial that water activities are undertaken in a safe and sensible manner. Whether it is in the bathroom, on the farm, at a pool or the beach, there are three things I'd like everyone to remember about water safety:

1. Stay alert, and make sure all water activities for children are supervised by a responsible adult.
2. Drowning can take less than a minute and is most often a silent event, so be sure of your child's whereabouts whenever near water.
3. Also, although not a well known fact, in Australia men are three times more likely than women to drown.

## BATH TIME TIPS



**HAVE EVERYTHING YOU NEED, NEVER LEAVE**



**EMPTY THE BATH**



**BATH SEATS ARE NO SUBSTITUTE FOR SUPERVISION**



**LEARN RESUSCITATION**

## AUSSIES HELP PREVENT DROWNING IN THE PHILIPPINES

ROYAL LIFE SAVING RECENTLY ANSWERED A CALL FOR HELP FROM OUR SISTER ORGANISATION, THE PHILIPPINE LIFESAVING SOCIETY, WHO ARE WORKING TO PROVIDE A DROWNING-FREE FUTURE IN THE PHILIPPINES. EACH YEAR, 350,000 CHILDREN ARE ESTIMATED TO DROWN ACROSS ASIA. AT LEAST 6000 CHILDREN ARE KNOWN TO DROWN EACH YEAR IN THE PHILIPPINES ALONE.

Our outgoing National President, Shayne Baker, and Glyn Reinbott travelled to Boracay Island to facilitate the re-qualification of some of the Philippine Lifesaving Society's volunteers, as well as working to support the assessment of new recruits to the organisation and assisting with the first lifesaving sporting event in the Philippines.

They also conducted a seminar about the importance of water safety for local community members, including representatives from local government, the coast guard, resort owners and lifesavers.

*"In Australia, we're lucky that lifesaving has been a part of our culture for more than 115 years, but our nearby neighbours in the region haven't been so fortunate," Mr Baker said. "Given that wealth of experience and knowledge it makes sense that we lend a hand to organisations like the Philippine Lifesaving Society who are working to save lives.*

*"It was inspiring to see their enthusiasm and to know that our contribution really is making a difference."*

In total 52 participants received the award of Bronze Medallion, 70 people participated in the seminar and 85 people competed in the first lifesaving event in the Philippines.



## SWEET SUCCESS IN SPORT

Royal Life Saving's sporting teams have continued their recent success with wins at the Arafura Games and the Commonwealth Pool Lifesaving Championships.

The junior team, nicknamed the Junior Barras, took on some of the region's best teams in the International Life Saving Competition at the Arafura Games in the Northern Territory, claiming first place by a comfortable margin.

At the Commonwealth Pool Lifesaving Championships, which were held in Edmonton, Canada, the Aussie Barras retained their Championship crown, fending off stiff competition from Canada and South Africa. Over three days of competition, the Australian team rewrote the Championship Record books, smashing an astounding 11 Championship Records in individual and team events.

The team also claimed two new Commonwealth Records. In total, the team brought home 15 gold medals across the three day Championships.

Royal Life Saving's National Sports Development Officer, Penny Hodgers, said the performance by the two teams had been outstanding.

*"However it's important to remember that this isn't just a sport. Pool Lifesaving is a great way to get people to practice skills that they may well need to use one day to save a life," Mrs Hodgers said.*

*"While this is the elite end of the sport, there are plenty of people who train throughout the year, honing their rescue skills. We'd encourage anyone who wants to regularly practice these lifesaving skills to join their local club."*

To find a club near you, go to [www.royallifesaving.com.au/Clubs](http://www.royallifesaving.com.au/Clubs)



## POOLWERX/KEEP WATCH

*PoolWerx Joondalup franchisees Ian Coyle & Ruth Gordon are proud supporters of the 'Keep Watch' program. We asked them what drives their dedication to promoting the educational messages of the program.*

Working in the pool industry you hear so many stories of injuries or a death involving the backyard pool and it is heart-breaking to think they could have been prevented by taking a few extra steps to make the family backyard pool as safe as possible.

As part of PoolWerx's national partnership with 'Keep Watch' program we work with our local community to educate parents and children about the importance of pool safety. In store we run a 'Kid's Club' that over the course of the year provides kids with fun and interactive items, including colouring-in competitions containing pool safety messages.

Everyday in the field our technicians are promoting the key messages of the 'Keep Watch' program. We conduct health checks and advise clients on improvements to be made to their pool area to maximise safety. Unfortunately, most people don't consider the consequences, for example, of a gate latch not closing properly until it's too late.

We also work closely with local pre-schools and day care centers to provide parents with information for children just learning to swim. We believe it is imperative to keep parents and children aware of the dangers of not maintaining safety in the pool area.

## POSEIDON

Royal Life Saving is delighted that world renowned aquatic safety company, Poseidon, has offered its support to our aquatic industry services program. Poseidon has offered to sponsor key industry research which will help Royal Life Saving ensure we keep improving the industry standards which keep swimmers safe.

The Poseidon system is a computer-aided system dedicated to support lifeguards; it sends them alerts on a real-time basis and give them the exact coordinates and location of a drowning swimmer in the pool. It uses a camera network that continually surveys the pool and a specialised software system that analyses the trajectories of swimmers. If someone suddenly stops moving, the system can alert lifeguards in as little as 10 seconds.

***“Poseidon provides peace of mind, not only for lifeguards, but also for swimmers and parents alike,”***

**Peter Caswell, General Manager Third Watch Pty Ltd said.**

*“The burden on our lifeguards is immense, but Poseidon enables a lifeguard to radically reduce the time it takes to effect a rescue.*

*Poseidon helps them manage this enormous responsibility by providing a faster means of detection. Poseidon is really a lifeguards ‘third eye’ in helping to reduce drownings and near drowning incidents”.*

Since it was first installed in 2000, Poseidon has helped with the rescue of 16 people in France, Germany, UK, Netherlands and Belgium. We thank them for their support.

**Below: A real-life rescue that was facilitated by Poseidon.**



## HAVE YOUR SAY

Do you have a passion for pool safety? We need people with a passion for making aquatic facilities safe to have their say in the latest review of the Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation.

Royal Life Saving is responsible for the Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation, which has been published nationally since 1994. There are 87 separate guidelines across seven separate sections covering everything from First Aid to Facility Design.

These guidelines are regularly reviewed to make sure they keep up to date with changes in the aquatic industry. A new draft of the guidelines covering three sections (General Operations, Programs and First Aid) has recently been released and we are holding public consultations in every State and Territory so you can have your say.

If you're interested in participating, please check our website [www.royallifesaving.com.au](http://www.royallifesaving.com.au) for details of the consultation date nearest you or call us on 02 8217 3111.

## BIG SPLASH SWIMATHON

UNCLE TOBYS®

Big  
Splash  
Swimathon

Royal Life Saving is delighted to launch a brand new partner and a brand new event, the UNCLE TOBYS Big Splash Swimathon. Schools and community groups from around Australia are being asked to join us to raise money to help us prevent drowning in children aged 3 -15 as well as supporting their local organisation. The proceeds from each event will be split between the host organisation, for example the local school, and Royal Life Saving. To make it easier for schools to participate, we are encouraging them to run their Swimathon in conjunction with their annual school carnival.

Our long term aim for this event is to eliminate drowning deaths in the 3-15 year age group and to halve drowning deaths in 15-24 year olds.

Australian kids today are missing out on the swimming and water safety lessons that most parents remember from their childhoods. For some children, that may well end up costing them their lives; not necessarily today when you are around to watch them, but somewhere in their tomorrow when you can't be there to guide them.

We know young adults aged 15 – 24 are drowning at an increasing rate because they face specific risks. However, sharing some basic swimming and water safety knowledge while they're growing up will ingrain in them safe behaviours that may well save their lives tomorrow.

Watch out for a major feature about the UNCLE TOBYS Big Splash Swimathon in the next edition of SuperVision.

For more information about how to get involved, go to our website [www.royallifesaving.com.au/Bigsplash](http://www.royallifesaving.com.au/Bigsplash)

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